



Ronnie Raum New Forest Supervisor

As the new forest supervisor of Mark Twain National Forest, I would like to introduce myself. I am Ronnie Raum and came to Mark Twain National Forest from being the forest supervisor of the National Forests and Grasslands of Texas. I am looking forward to serving as forest supervisor for Mark Twain National Forest and will strive to provide the best care possible of the public's forests.

Since you are receiving this newsletter, I know that you are interested in the management of Mark Twain National Forest. At this point, revising the Land and Resource Management Plan for Mark Twain is the Forest's number one priority. A team of resource specialists has been assembled to work on Forest Plan revision. I have charged the team to keep you informed about the progress of the revision and to keep you involved in the revision process.

Forest Plan revision will build on and strengthen our ecosystem approach to managing the National Forest. This approach focuses Forest Plan revision on long-term ecosystem health and sustainability.

Our goal is to keep the process as simple as possible and focus on the issues identified in the Notice of Intent and complete Forest Plan revision in 2005.

In the future, we will be holding more public meetings around the Forest. These meetings will be designed to inform you about what is happening on the Forest, bring you up to date on the progress of Plan revision and ensure you have an opportunity to give us feedback. I look forward to meeting with you.

Forest Plan Revision Status

On April 16, 2002, Mark Twain National Forest published a Notice Of Intent to revise the Forest Plan. This initiated a public comment period that lasted until August 2, 2002. The Forest hosted four public meetings during the comment period to explain the Forest Plan revision process and to receive comments.

We received approximately 605 public responses through letters, e-mails, and public meeting comment forms. The Forest Service's Content Analysis Team helped analyze and summarize the comments. Their report is available from the Forest or on line at:
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/marktwain/>.

The Forest Plan Revision Team is conducting an extensive analysis of public comments to refine the revision topics defined in the Notice Of Intent and develop key issue statements. The team is also considering an enormous amount of specific resource information as they determine how to address the revision topics and issues that will be used to develop alternatives for the Forest Plan revision.

Later this year and into next year, a proposed action and carefully developed alternatives will be analyzed for possible environmental effects that may result from their implementation. A Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared that describes the analysis and potential effects. It is expected to be published around June 2004.

Forest Plan Revision Team

Plan Revision will be the work of a variety of resource specialists. A core team that has the primary responsibility for the plan revision process will coordinate their work.

The core team is made up of:

Laura Watts - Planning Team Leader. Laura has the primary responsibility for guiding the overall revision efforts. Laura has worked on the Mark Twain National Forest for 12 years and has a degree in Landscape Architecture.

Mike Schanta - Resource Analyst. Mike will guide our use of computer models and geographic information systems (GIS). Mike has a degree in Forestry and also serves as GIS Coordinator for Mark Twain National Forest.

Karen Mobley - Socio-economic Resources. Karen is responsible for coordinating the analysis, evaluation and inventory of recreation opportunities, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, scenery management, road system, mineral, special use authorizations, social and economic sustainability, and environmental justice/civil rights. Karen has a degree in Parks and Recreation Management and has 25 years of experience with the Forest Service.

Paul Nelson - Ecosystem restoration and management. Paul has a bachelor of science degree in wildlife management and conservation from Southwest Missouri State University and a master of science degree in botany from Southern Illinois University. Paul worked for Missouri Department of Natural Resources for over 20 years and has worked for the Forest Service for three years.

Roads Analysis Completed

The Forest Service issued a national policy known as the National Forest System Road Management Rule on January 12, 2001. In accordance with the new policy, Mark Twain National Forest has been conducting a forest-wide Roads Analysis. This analysis has focused on Forest Service system roads that are designed for passenger car traffic. This includes the paved and some gravel roads found on National Forest lands. The purpose of the analysis is to insure that additions to the National Forest road network are essential for resource management and access. It is also intended to insure that construction, reconstruction, and maintenance of roads minimize adverse environmental impacts.

A Roads Analysis Report has been finalized. It contains a variety of information about the Mark Twain National Forest road system as well as some key findings and recommendations. You can access the Roads Analysis Report on the Mark Twain National Forest web site at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/marktwain/>.

New Planning Rule Proposed

A Proposed Revised Planning Rule for implementing the National Forest Management Act was published in the Federal Register on December 6, 2002. It is available on the Forest Service website at: <http://www.fs.fed.us/emc/nfma/final120602.pdf>. The public comment period ends March 6, 2003.

The proposed rule includes changes that are designed to provide a simpler planning process that will be more responsive in carrying out plan revisions. The proposed rule emphasizes ecological, social, and economic sustainability in managing our National Forests and Grasslands.

What does the Proposed Revised Planning Rule process mean to the ongoing Forest Plan Revision on Mark Twain National Forest? Since we began revision under the planning rule developed in 1982, we will continue our revision under those guidelines. When the Proposed Revised Planning Rule process concludes and a new rule is established, we will consider the transition language in the new rule, carefully evaluate the options we may have at the time, and decide how to proceed in the most efficient and effective way. Meeting expectations of the public, that Mark Twain National Forest be managed with professionalism and with the best stewardship possible, will be a major consideration in the decision on how to proceed.

Public Meetings Planned

Last year, we held several meetings across the Forest to inform the public about current Forest Service activities and programs and discuss public concerns. We found these meetings very helpful and have planned another series of meetings. If you have an issue that is of interest to the general public that you would like addressed at one of these meetings please send your suggestions to Charles Gill, Mark Twain National Forest, 401 Fairgrounds Road, Rolla, Missouri, 65401 or cgill@fs.fed.us

If you are planning to attend one of our meetings and have a special need such as signing or amplified hearing equipment, contact Charles Gill at the above address.

The public meetings will start at 7:00 P.M. at the following locations:

Tuesday April 8
Alton Senior Center
Alton, Missouri

Thursday April 10
Ozark Community Building
100 E. Elm Street
Ozark, Missouri

Tuesday April 22
Salem City Hall
202 North Washington
Salem, Missouri

Tuesday April 29
Madison County Senior Center
107 Spruce Street
Fredericktown, Missouri

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